

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 L-03

EB-11 AID-20 NEA-10 AGR-20 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00

DRC-01 /171 W

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R 121257Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7314

INFO AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 709

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, NG, LY

SUBJECT: KADHAFI VISIT TO NIGER

REF: NIAMEY A-15 OF MARCH 12, 1974

1. COL KADHAFI AND PARTY MADE OFFICIAL VISIT TO NIGER MARCH 7-9. VISIT ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR FOURTH DAY, BUT LIBYANS ARRIVED IN EXHAUSTED CONDITION AND TOLD GON THEY WANTED PROGRAM CURTAILED.

2. IT EVIDENT FROM BEGINNING THAT LIBYANS AND NIGERIENS ATTACHED DIFFERENT PRIORITIES TO VISIT. PRESIDENT DIORI, WHILE PRAISING KADHAFI FOR HIS REVOLUTIONARY VISION AND STEADFAST DEFENSE OF ARAB AND ISLAMIC CAUSES, EMPHASIZED NIGER'S URGENT AND MASSIVE NEED FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AS A RESULT OF THE DROUGHT. KADHAFI ON OTHER HAND BARELY ACKNOWLEDGED THE DROUGHT, PREFERRING TO CONCENTRATE IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE GLORIES OF ISLAM AND THE ARABIC LANGUAGE, THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS, AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ZIONISM, IMPERIALISM AND COLONIALISM.

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3. IN THE END TWO SIDES HOWEVER REACHED COMPROMISE IN THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF GRAND PRINCIPLES VERSUS TANGIBLE BENEFITS. WHILE FINAL COMMUNIQUE (REFAIR) EMBHASIZES IDEOLOGY AND REMAINS VAGUE ABOUT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, SUPPLEMENTARY ANNOUNCEMENT REFERS TO COOPERATION AGREEMENTS. THREE JOINT ORGANIZATIONS WERE CREATED DEALING WITH AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RANGES, FORESTRY AND IRRIGATION. A CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL CONVENTION WAS ALSO SIGNED PLEDGING THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE NIGER WITH ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS, PERSONNEL AND SCHOOLS FOR THE TEACHING OF ARABIC. IN ADDITION, LIBYA WILL FINANCE A RADIO STATION IN NIGER FOR THE PROPAGATION OF ISLAM IN AFRICA. SINCE DETAILS OMITTED AND NO DEFINITE COMMITMENTS OF FUNDS MADE, NIGERIENS DETERMINED TO NAIL DOWN THESE POINTS SOONEST. GON RECALLS THAT PREVIOUS LIBYAN PROMISES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WERE SLOW IN MATERIALIZING AND REQUIRED CONSIDERABLE PRODDING AND REMINDERS.

4. VISIT WAS NOT AN EASY ONE FOR GON. LIBYANS MADE LITTLE EFFORT TO RECIPROCATATE NATURAL WARMTH AND FRIENDLINESS OF NIGERIENS AND DID NOT HESITATE TO TELL HOSTS AT LAST MOMENT TO CANCEL OR CHANGE PARTS OF PROGRAM. AT OTHER TIMES LIBYANS SIMPLY SHOWED UP AS MUCH AS TWO HOURS LATE FOR EVENTS. THERE WERE ALSO PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATIONS SINCE LIBYANS INSISTED ON SPEAKING ARABIC EVEN AT SOCIAL OCCASIONS DESPITE DEARTH OF TRANSLATORS AND IN SOME CASES MUTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH. AFTER COL KADHAFI'S PLANE TOOK OFF, PRESIDENT DIORI SUMMED UP FEELINGS OF GON (AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS) AS HE REMARKED TO SEVERAL CHADY MINISTERS AND AMBASSADORS "YOU CERTAINLY WERE PUT TO A SEVERE TEST." (VOUS AVEZ CERTAINEMENT ETE MIS A RUDE EPREUVE.)
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